



## HIGHLIGHTS OF SUPPLIERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

October 1 & 2, 2020, held by videoconference

AORS held its annual Suppliers – Directors meeting on October 1, and Fall Board of Directors meeting on October 2, both by videoconference. Following are highlights from the meetings.

**1. Suppliers Meeting** – AORS Directors met with 24 supplier members to discuss how AORS and our Local Associations (LAs) are doing at helping our supplier and municipal members connect. Much of the discussion revolved around how municipalities, supplier companies, AORS and the LAs have had to adjust during the pandemic, and what steps we can take to continue providing value to our members in spite of restrictions on in-person meetings and events. Most participants confirmed that their municipality or company continue to limit contacts outside of their organizations, with many staff still working from home where practical. Some LAs have held virtual meetings; the supplier members appreciated the opportunity to “see” their colleagues and encouraged other LAs to hold similar events. In spite of the reduced level of activity, all the suppliers agreed that it is still important to support AORS and the LAs, and intended to pay membership dues when requested. Cancellation of the Trade Show had a significant impact on AORS revenues, and the lack of events at which the Spotlight directory could be distributed and promoted is making it difficult to secure new advertisers for the 2021 edition. Several suppliers agreed to help out by taking copies of 2020 Spotlight and 2021 application forms to distribute within their own networks. Supplier members also responded positively to the idea of a Virtual Trade Show.

**2. 2021 Trade Show**– While the 2021 Trade Show is still being planned for Barrie (rescheduled once the 2020 show was cancelled), there is concern that large group gatherings may still not be allowed by early June 2021. A recommendation was made that the Trade Show be rescheduled to later in the year to improve the chances that gatherings will be permitted by then. The Trade Show Organizing Committee was asked to investigate options.

**3. 2021 Spotlight** – Larry Maddeaux, Spotlight Committee Co-chair, reported that the committee has started working on the 2021 edition. With no events since February at which to promote the Spotlight, it has been particularly challenging finding new advertisers. All members are encouraged to help by promoting ads to any suppliers they deal with, and receive an entry into a draw for \$1000 gift card for each new ad they secure. Publication will be delayed into February 2021 allowing deadlines to be extended. A higher than normal number of advertisers have not yet paid for their 2020 ad, possibly a sign of the times. Larry also reported that a new publisher has been hired to replace Keyline Advertising, following Dick Verbeek’s retirement.

**4. Education Committee** – Michelle Poirier and Dennis O’Neil reported on the successful transition of PWLDP and Book 7 courses to online delivery. Sessions of both were launched in September to positive reviews. Most of the courses offered through Groundforce Training are also now being delivered online. Some courses don’t lend themselves to online delivery (e.g. chainsaw, in-seat equipment operator). In these cases, small group or one-on-one training is still available, with appropriate precautions in place. With cancellation of most spring training, and many municipalities cutting back their training budgets, AORS will experience a significant reduction in training numbers and revenues. Members are encouraged to consider AORS for their training needs, and we will continue to adapt the training to meet their requirements. Dennis also reported that revisions to Book 7 are in development, likely to be

released for the 2021 construction season. The Book 7 course will be updated and a refresher course will also be developed.

**5. Finance Committee** – As noted above, AORS has experienced a significant drop in revenues as a result of cancellation of spring training programs and the trade show, and non or late payment of Spotlight invoices. In addition, several Local Associations have yet to pay their 2020 membership dues. Some indicated a reluctance to charge their members dues given the lack of activities this year. However, the supplier members who participated in the Suppliers – Directors meeting the prior day voiced strong support for AORS and the LAs, and agreed that it was important to submit their membership dues to ensure the associations can continue to serve their members and emerge from the pandemic strong. All LAs were encouraged to submit their dues to AORS, even if they choose to charge reduced fees to their members for 2020. On a positive note, AORS has strong reserves in place, and is cutting discretionary spending to minimize the net loss for 2020.

**6. Nominations and Appointments** – Glenn Harding, CRS, Chatham-Kent Road Association, submitted his resignation from the Board and the position of 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President. Joe Reid, CRS-S, District 8 Road Supervisors Association was nominated and approved as 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, to take effect immediately. In light of the lack of events at which President Bill Wilson was able to officiate this year, it was recommended and approved that the normal progression of the Corporate Directors which usually takes place at the AGM be paused for one year, allowing Bill to serve a second term as President. Mike Alcock, Huron County Road Supervisors Association, will also serve a second term as 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President. Kevin Boucock, CRS-S, Past President, was nominated and approved to serve on the Certification Board for a 3-year term starting in 2021.

**7. Committees** – The Board reviewed and approved the memberships of its various standing committees. While membership on some committees is predefined in their mandates, others are open to any Director or member-at-large. Anyone interested in serving on a committee should contact John Maheu.

#### **8. Upcoming Meetings**

- The 2021 Winter Board of Directors meeting and the Annual General Meeting, which would normally be held late February in conjunction with the OGRA Conference, will be held by videoconference on dates to be announced. The 2021 OGRA Conference will be held virtually, so it was decided to hold the AORS BOD and AGM on different dates to minimize potential conflicts. Stay tuned.
- In anticipation that in-person meetings will be allowed again by summer 2021, the Board is tentatively scheduled to meet June 24 and 25 in Barrie (LA workshop and Summer BOD meeting respectively); and September 16 and 17 in Grand Bend (Suppliers – Directors meeting and Fall BOD meeting respectively). Directors are encouraged to attend all Board meetings or send an alternate from their Local Association.
- Local Associations are urged to avoid the above dates when scheduling their own meetings and events, and coordinate with neighbouring associations to pick dates that avoid conflicts and accommodate Supplier members and AORS staff who travel to attend several meetings in a week. Until such time as in person meetings are allowed, AORS can assist any LA that is contemplating hosting a virtual meeting.
- November 13 is the deadline for applications to be considered at the next Certification Board meeting.